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Remarks

Claims 1 to 11 remain in this application.

Claims 13 to 16 stand withdrawn pursuant to a restriction requirement.

The claims have been amended in editorial manner in order to more particularly conform with the provisions of 35 U.S.C. 112.

Reconsideration of the rejection of Claims 1 and 11 as being clearly anticipated by Eaton is requested.

Eaton describes a locking hinge joint 34 that releaseably joins together overlapped edge portions of tray panels 28 and 30. The joint includes fingers 36 on one panel 28 that fit into slots 46 in the other panel 30 as well as locking flanges 50 on the one panel 28 that fit into openings 52 in the other panel 30. Assembly of the hinged joint 34 is accomplished by simply positioning the tray panels 28 and 30 in side-by-side relationship and then elevating the opposite side of either or both of the panels. Once the panels 28 and 30 have been placed in this angled relationship, the tray panels are moved toward each other so that the fingers 36 are inserted through the slots 46. Once the fingers 36 have reached the forward limit of their travel, the elevated side(s) of the tray panels 28 and 30 are lowered to return the panels to a coplanar relationship. In so doing, the locking flanges 50 are inserted into the openings 52 and resist against lateral separation of the assembled tray panels 28 and 30. (see Col. 6, lines 17-28).

Claim 1 requires that two sheet metal parts be held in a secured position "by a hook connection between said recess and said elevation". Eaton is void of any such structure or teaching. Specifically, there is no hook connection between the fingers 36

and slots 46. Further, the locking flanges 50 of Eaton do not form a hook connection between the fingers 36 and slots 46.

Claim 1, as amended, further requires "a recess ... in one of said parts and an elevation ... in the other of said parts, said elevation being elastically fitted into said recess to form a latched click connection." Eaton is void of any such structure or teaching. Specifically, the fingers 36 of Eaton are not elastically fitted into the slots 46 and do not form a latched click connection (see Applicant's description at page 6, lines 6 to 15).

In view of the above, a rejection of claim 1 as being anticipated by Eaton is not warranted pursuant to the provisions of 35 U.S.C. 102.

Claim 11 requires "a first sheet metal part having at least one recess therein, and a second sheet metal part disposed in overlying parallel relation to said first sheet metal part and having at least one elevation disposed in said recess of said first sheet metal part to releaseably secure said second sheet part relative to said first sheet part". Eaton does not describe or teach such a structure. Note that the fingers 36 of Eaton do not constitute "elevations" and do not "releaseably secure" the panel 30 to the panel 28.

Claim 11 further requires "a hoop receiving said first sheet metal part therein to retain said elevation in said recess". Eaton does not describe or teach such a structure.

In view of the above, a rejection of claim 11 as being anticipated by Eaton is not warranted pursuant to the provisions of 35 U.S.C. 102.

Reconsideration of the rejection of Claims 11 and 12 as being clearly anticipated by Larsen is requested.

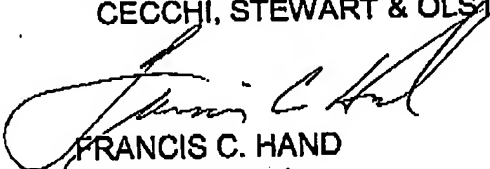
Larsen describes a girder 1 that has two side members 2, 3. One side member 2 (see Fig. 2) has a locking tongue opening 11 and a locking gill opening 12. The other side member 3 (see Fig. 3) has a locking tongue 9 that cooperates with the opening 11 and a locking gill 10 that cooperates with the gill opening 12. As shown in Fig. 5, the locking tongue 9 projects through the opening 11 while the locking gill 10 has an upper surface that abuts against a lower surface of the gill opening 12.

Claim 11, as amended, requires "a second sheet metal part ... having at least one elevation... and a hoop receiving first sheet metal part...". Larsen is void of any teaching of a hoop. In this respect, the locking tongue 9 of Larsen is not a hoop but instead extends in a cantilevered manner through the opening 11.

In view of the above, in rejection of claim 11, as amended, it is not warranted pursuant to the provisions of 35 U.S.C. 102.

Respectfully submitted

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